

Pendle Hill

VERSES and SKETCHES
by
LUCY M. KEY.



PENDLE
HILL . . .

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GIPSY SONG

This baby sleeps in my arms
Out on the open moor;
Safe from all fears and alarms
Here on the open moor.
Steady and strong and sure
Is a mother's step on the moor;
Asleep or when waking
This baby is taking
Life from the open moor.

He opens his baby eyes
At the wide expanse of the moor;
In glad and delighted surprise
At the heather and grass of the moor;
He loves to be dipped in the pure
And life-giving streams of the moor.
His daddy is making
A cradle for taking
His baby across the moor.

HILLTOP GRASS

These tiresome tufts are tawny
In the clear morning light;
By day they are less thorny
Than when you climbed at night;

But oh the quiet splendour
Of moonlight on the hill!
The thought of it will lend a
Romance to memory still.

CLITHEROE

Pendle Hill, the river Ribble,
Fields of celandines and daisies,
Lambs that frolic, sheep that nibble,
Birds that seem to sing the praises

Of the sun, the glowing river,
Hill and dale and wood and moorland,
Green fields and the life they live there,
Lancashire, how lovely your land!

The garden is full of daffodils,
But it seems cramped compared with the rills
I have watched, flowing out of the hills;
Its crazy paths are pretty, but they
Cannot compare with the stones far away,
The ledges of beautiful smooth brown stone,
In the hidden stream that flows down alone
In the heart of Pendle Hill;
The atmosphere here is still;
But it isn't the same as the welcoming air
Of the cool fresh wind up on Pendle there,
When you climb to the top of the hill.
Then why do I linger here still?
Why not rise
And view the skies
Ever changing like the hill?

A golden star shot down the sky
As I came down the track;
Not one of that fair galaxy
Above old Pendle's back;

No, but a meteor swift and sure,
Falling upon the earth,
Emblem of God's love, deep and pure,
Coming to bless our mirth.

PENDLE AT DAWN

The morning sky is golden
Along the Pendle ridge;
Even so the people olden
Beheld each gleaming bridge
The link between this ring of fells
And Kemple and Longridge.

Deep down in this green hollow
Four sheep stand in the morn;
The grey limestone above them,
The rosy glow of dawn.

Far off across the valley
I see a farmhouse light;
Just at the foot of Pendle,
So short is their brief night;
And now the milk-girls sally
Forth townwards, fresh and bright.

Not only in the eastward
The morning sky is bright,
The glow is mostly westward,
The northward first showed light;
The south alone lies hidden
Within the mist of night,
But it will have most sunshine
Throughout the long daylight.

Evening star that leads me still
Up the side of yon steep hill,
Through the pinewood sloping down
Where the bracken crackles brown,
And the far-flung counterpane
Of green patchwork fields and grain
Gives a sense of space and light
As one gazes from the hill;
While the moon is rising, still,
Pure, benign and bright,
Leading in the night.



WILD LIFE

Rabbits scurry over Pendle,
Curlews wheel and call;
Sheep and lambs lie in warm places
Where the reeds grow tall;

Little birds are whistling, crying,
Circling through the air;
Winds are chasing, clouds are flying,
Movement everywhere.

THE SUMMERHOUSE BUS

Oh were this bus on Pendle
How handy it would be,
To shelter from the weather
Together there with thee.

Whatever wind was blowing
We'd swivel the bus around,
And even were it snowing,
Some pleasure could be found

In lurking there within it,
And gazing at the view,
Or keeping the things in it
All spick and span and new;

In taking tea inside there
Or out beneath the sky,
Hearing only sheep call
Or the lone curlew cry.

NOVEMBER

The trees make patterns on the lane,
The Ribble murmurs a refrain;
Pendle Hill looms grey and green,
Moonlight sheds a silver sheen,
Brilliant moonlight to remember,
Night of beauty, in November.

PENDLE POOLS

These aching feet
Would heal in peat,
In mossy pools
Whose water cools
So soft and sweet;
Reed-fringed and still
On yonder hill
Waiting they lie
Beneath the sky
For footsore wanderers
Hill-climbing ponderers
And all who cry
For peace and quiet on the hill,
For leisure to watch each sweet rill
Leap tumbling down with curling foam
Down from its far-off mountain home
To the deep quiet clough.
What though the grass be rough,
Though sedge and reed crowd round its bank,
The ground beneath be wet and dank,
Yet this is Nature's floor,
This hill is heaven's door,
Here we can thank
And worship God whose loving ways
Fill all our days and nights with praise.

THE MOOR

Let the wind chisel your face
With a refiner's grace;
Let the wild curlew's cry
Lift up your heart on high,
Let the sweet mournful note
From some wild robin's throat
Whisper of sweetness,
Nimbleness, fleetness,
Out on the hillside there
Where the wild winds lay bare
The bleaching bones of old gnarled roots
Of gorse and heather, mountain fruits,
Daisies, and masses
Of coarse rough grasses,
Green grass the sheep's teeth tear.
Let the wind call you there
Out on the hillside bare.

PRE-HISTORY

Lord, thou hast shown us on the hill,
How our own lives are linked up still
With all the peoples of the past;
Not only those who lived here last,
But with that prehistoric race
Who walked the hill with lively pace
That surely filled their forms with grace
And added beauty to their face
In days of flint and stone.

They loved the moon even more than we,
They had the sun and stars to see,
Their skies were always smoke-cloud free,
They had the winds for company
At home or when alone;

Surely they loved the open air,
Loved to awaken on the fair
Golden and green hillside.

Sure each man loved his bride
In lively, gay, and playful ways,
Surely their lives were filled with praise
Of thee on every side.
Fashioned in thine own image then
No less than any modern men
They had their joy and pride.

Come out and take your leisure still
On this grey old Pendle Hill.
See the sheep lie snug and warm
Sheltering from the passing storm.
Hear the chattering curlews call
When you rouse them near the wall.
Study shapes of stones and rocks,
See the clouds come up in flocks
Over the long dark hill.

Drink from some clear mountain rill;
See the mauve tufts of the grasses
Waving in each wind that passes.
Lazily watch every bee
As it travels dizzily.
Wander freely where you will
On this grassy old hill.

WRITING

Write about the streams far away,
The little pools where the minnows play,
The crisp and rosy daisies there
Peering into the bright blue air;
Smooth grey stones where fish lie hidden;
Ponies wanderers have ridden,
Leaping upon their backs bare.

Write of the sun that circles round,
Or we round it — of all you've found,
From his darting sunbeams' rays,
How to rise and sing God's praise,
Of sheep and lambs that slowly pass
Among the long and flowery grass
And all the hillside ways.

Of village life with sights like these—
Cows walking homewards at their ease,
Children racing round at play
Rejoicing in the open day;
Chimneys black against the trees,
Smoke uprising in the breeze,
The streamlet on its way.

THE STREAM THAT FLOWS BY MEARLEY

The stream that flows by Mearley
Is fair as Angram stream;
One learns to love them dearly
And seek their vagrant gleam;
From foxglove time to frostbite,
From snow to radiant June,
By black midnight or starlight,
Come hear their merry tune.

For we were made to wander,
To see the stars that rise,
To roam afield and ponder
And grow more weatherwise.
The stubble in the autumn,
The primrose in the spring,
The crimson hip and haw come
To cheer our wandering.

PENDLE TOURISTS

Pendle tourists long since gone,
You have left your mark upon
Every wayside rock and stone,
Where the vision of the mind
Tells me how you used to find
This green lane to Pendle Hill.
Shows me how you used to see
In each gnarled and twisted tree
Some fantastic goblin form
Purposing to do you harm.
Tells me how you used to find
In the soughing of the wind
Sounds of broomsticks whirring by
In the dark and wintry sky.
Tells me how in later days
Folk came up with different ways;
How a later generation
Came up here from Clitheroe Station,
For a picnic with a view
Of the green encircling fells,
Hills and streams and woodland dells,
Villages and upland farms,
Trees that stretched out their green arms,
With a welcome pleasant look,
Offering many a sheltered nook
To those coming from the hill.
There are wanderers on you still,
Green-old, grey-old, Pendle Hill.

The many joys of Pendle Hill—
The wind that is so seldom still,
The bogs and peat and curlew's cry,
The sheep that wander there on high
On black-soiled Pendle Hill.
The water in the grassy streams
And pools where phosphorescence gleams;
The tawny tufts of coarse grass
And reeds that rustle as we pass,
The stretches of bright russet earth,
All these are joys that bring sweet mirth
To wanderers on the hill.



EVENING

The peaceful hour of closing day;
The black trees on the gold and grey,
The darkening green
Now faintly seen,
The glimmering line of wall and fence
Have filled me with a joy intense.
A starry twinkle peeping out,
The cattle browsing round about,
A horse that slowly grazes,
The darkening changing phases
Of sky and hill and meadow here
Have left the mind and fancy clear.
The last birds winging to the wood,
The sheep that ever nibble food,
The squelching mud around the gate
Where the young lively bullocks wait,
The gnarled and wrinkled hawthorn trees,
The frost that comes on by degrees,
The hillside stark against the sky,
Ridged like a monster lying high,
All these have filled me with delight,
In this brief hour of coming night.

PENDLE TOPS

Tuft, tuft, tuft, and tuft again
On this varied hilltop plain;
A quiet wind, foreboding rain;
Age-old, black-old, peaty pools,
A breath of sweet fresh air that cools,
The heather tufts like hedgehogs grim
Fringing along the peatholes' brim,
A curlew calling sweet and long,
The ever constant skylark's song,
Bright green of grass and sphagnum moss,
Red where cloudberry grows across,
A distant grouse's whirring wings,
Some faint far distant bird that sings,
Clouds like white masses in the air,
Joy, beauty, colour, everywhere,

PENDLE HILL

On those quiet slopes of Pendle
Dreams lie idle all the day,
But when dawns the merry moonlight
They are free to sport and play.

Gusts and showers of idle fancies
Flicker to and from the hill,
Then an interval of silence
While the very heart seems still.

PENDLE PALACE

“Cinderella’s garret
Or Pendle Palace here,
Which of them, if offered,
Would you prefer, my dear?”

“Oh, give me Pendle Palace
Where winds with streams entwine,
Its roof with clouds bestudded,
Its green floor shall be mine.”

“Then you shall be a Princess,
The sheep your retinue;
This quiet mountain pony
Shall be transformed to two

Fine spirited white horses
To draw a golden coach.”

“Nay, give me reeds and rushes,
Let no wealth here encroach.

This airy Pendle palace
With its long smooth outline,
Its sky more gay than ceilings,
And air more pure than wine,
Will fill my heart with feelings
That make this life divine.”

MEARLEY CLOUGH

How dull and lifeless town life seems
Compared with studying the gleams
Of Mearley every day;
Remote and lonely though it be,
It is the land of dreams for thee,
So hence, away, away!

For Mearley has a special grace
Not found in any other place
By thee, dear friend, and me,
It is the wildest, deepest clough
On gentle Pendle, and more rough,
More rugged, is its scree.

MEARLEY STREAM

Down the silken streamlet hurries
Eddying in creamy flurries,
Bubbling, frothing, foaming essence
Whose alive and living presence
Brightens this dark hill;
Stream that flings itself down Mearley,
Making trees and grasses grow,
Springing glassily and clearly
With its sparkling flow;
Primroses adorn its brim
Mosses in recesses dim
Make a velvet carpet there
Outspread in the open air;
Walls, the dark hill's rounded rim,
Roof, the stream-reflected sky,
Trees that spread fair branches high
Above the stream at Mearley.

GARB

Pendle wears a drifting mist,
Woven of grey and amethyst,
Fringed with sparkling rain;
The low foothills are bright green,
Dark screes are visible between,
Above the reedy plain.

MEARLEY STREAM AGAIN

See the streamlet, laughing, gay,
Purling wimpling, on its way,
Over pebbles worn and gray,
Ever flowing.

Does it come from yon green hill?
Is its source up there still?
Starting as a tiny rill
In the grasses?

Does it bring from far away
Music heard at break of day,
From each wind that on its way
Lightly passes?

Every lonely curlew's cry,
Bleat of sheep and lambs on high,
Horse's quick impatient sigh,
Cattle lowing?

SANDALS

“Sandals on Pendle?”
“Why not?”
“The Big End'll
 Tear them to pieces!”
“What rot!”

MOONRISE

See the moon rise over Pendle
With a perfect grace;
Golden, golden, golden, golden,
Is her quiet face;
In the west, though stars are shining,
Daylight lingers yet,
On the grass the frost is riming,
Though the dew is wet.

MARCH FROST

The sun peeped over Pendle
As I set out to-day;
Now he seems swinging upwards
And hurrying on his way;
Through the white mists of morning
He sends a rainbow ray.

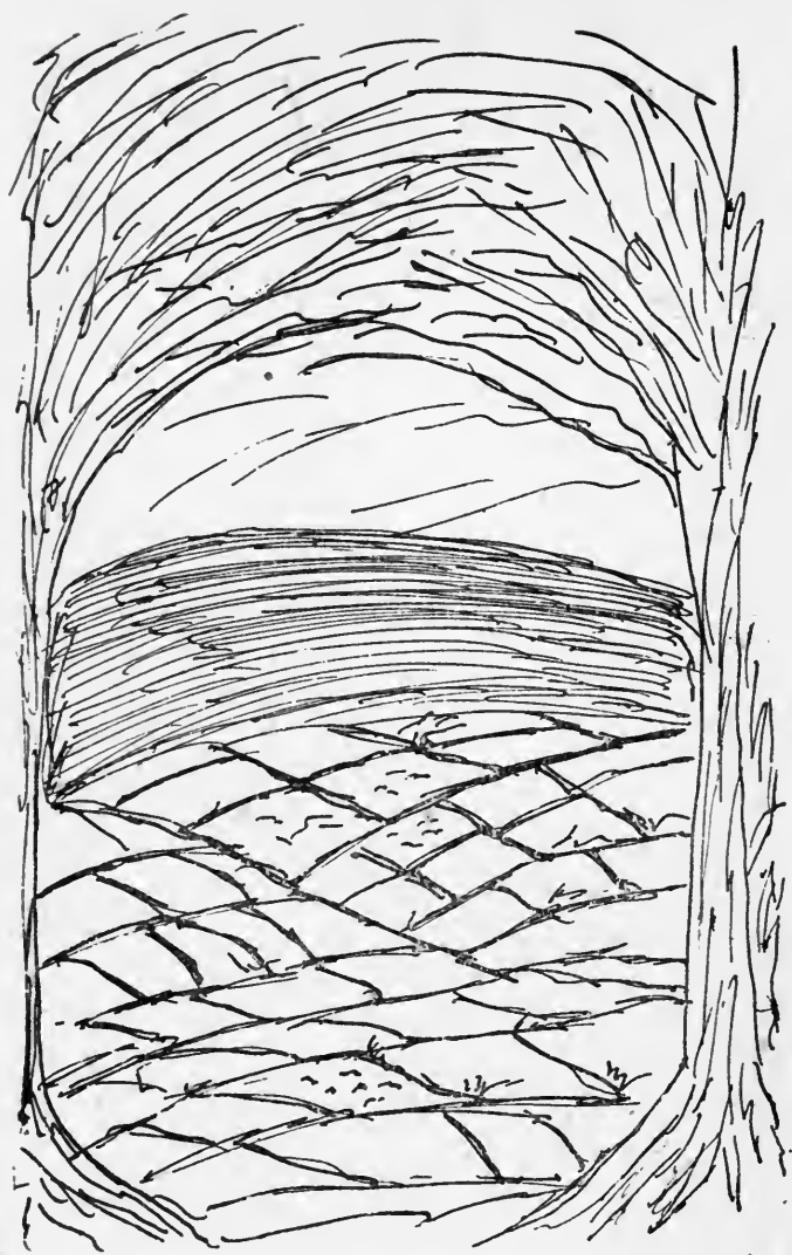
The fields are white and hoary,
The trees are frost-grey, too;
A silver morning glory
Irradiates the view;
The wonder of the sunrise,
So old and yet so new.

CLITHEROE CASTLE

Even here in this old Castle ground
Some space and freedom can be found
For bairns to play;
The ramparts rattle with their clogs,
They race about the grass with dogs,
And shout all day.

Where once the sentries kept their guard
And all was bolted, spiked and barred,
All now is free;
Gay children's voices echo round
The quiet old parading ground
In lively glee.

Once more the lilac buds are seen,
Their sooty stalks tipped with fresh green;
No doubt, of old,
In Tudor times, and later, too,
There were young children here who knew
These days of gold.



GLASSWATER

The water spurtles like spun glass
Down this narrow hillside pass;
Merrily,
Cheerily,
It gurgles over bright wet stones,
Swirls past others like bleached bones,
Washes past the grass;
A fallen tree-trunk, stripped and bare
Lies across it close to where
Two little waterfalls
Leap from the rocky falls
Into a dark and solemn pool,
Echoing, eddying, cool;
Then other pebbles
With sharps and trebles
In many musical tones.

LANDSCAPE (AROUND CLITHEROE)

Perch up here and rest awhile
On this wall with this stone stile;
Gaze at the black scree again
Now down to the wide green plain;
There is Downham, in the trees;
Worsa, hill of memories;
Worston further on again
Nestling in its tree-lined plain;
Clitheroe, that much-loved town,
Like a smudge of grey swansdown,
Wears a smoky wreath and crown;
Even that clean and wholesome town
Seems so grey when one looks down
From the hill to that green plain;
Now look to the hills again
Far across to Longridge Fell,
And the others—who can tell
All the hills that rampart round
Clitheroe's fair fertile ground?

MORNING

Flickering, whispering fancies wind
In and out of this active mind,
Weaving a garb for a fairy muse,
Teaching her how to bring fresh news
Down from the open hillside there
Into the city bleak and bare,
Telling a tale of the morning mists
Softer than gleam of amethysts,
Warm and dry as the finest woof
Ever made beneath weaver's roof.
Soft green mosses bright and wet,
Pools with peat as black as jet,
Toadstools red among the bracken
With its stiff dry stalks that cracken
As the rustling wind goes by;
Shapes of clouds across the sky,
Rings of hills against the dawn,
Flickering, quivering, pulsing morn,
Faintly crimson, seeming breathing,
Coming over Pendle, wreathing
Hill and dale and tree and wood
In a slowly moving flood
Of the daylight pure and clear;
Old earth stretches—"Dawn is here;
Over there is Chanticleer
Sending his long pealing forth
'Hullabaloo' across the north;
Another answers from the south
From the farm by Mearley mouth;
Angram cocks take up the strain;
It is echoed back again
By the cocks at Worston too;
Other farms are now in view—
Barkerfield at Pendle foot,
Pendle's green and rounded root,—
Lonsdale's, Hookcliffe, and the rest,
Answered over from the west
Over massive Worsaw End
On to Chatburn too;
Living, breathing, pulsing view,
Ever fresh and ever new."

PENDLETON BY MOONLIGHT

A stream runs down the village street,
The inn is painted cream;
The houses, ancient, stone and neat,
Rest in a moonlit dream;
The roar of water sounds all night,
Green moss invades the stone;
Small is the cottage of delight
In which I live alone.

A jasmine flowers around the door;
Inside, the fire gleams bright;
Smooth is the old grey flagstone floor
And peaceful here is night.
The children's voices at their play,
The three-times-daily bus,
Farm wagons creaking past, by day,
No other sound nor fuss.

THE SAME, BY DAY

In Pendleton, that lucky street,
The sunrise and sunset are sweet;
Across the east lies Pendle's ridge
And gazing towards the eastern bridge
We see the sun swing into sight
Quietly, after silent night;
Sometimes the hill's edge is aflame;
No two sunrises are the same;
Sometimes there lies a streak of gold
Beneath the clouds grey stiff and cold;
The village street and stream are gay
With the ascending orb of day;
Fresh is the sparkle and the tinkle
Of the soft silver sprays that twinkle
Where the brown river pebbles gleam,
And the brown ducks play in the stream,
Over towards the western end,
Where spreads the sunset at day's end,
Crimson with rays along the sky;
Black boughs the tree uprears on high,
Cool calm and radiant is the air;
Never was sunset view more fair
Truly the dawn and eve are sweet
At either end of this green street.

CONTRASTS

A rainstorm is beating on Pendle,
But the Sabden road is clear;
How can there be this difference
Between two places so near?

Here all is mild and pleasant,
There all is pleasure too,
Struggling against the rainstorm,
Battling one's way right through.

Hearken the wind on Pendle,
A changed and gentle note,
Low, sweet, delicate music,
That no one ever wrote.

SAWLEY MEETING HOUSE

The old oak breathes the spirit of the past;
Its timbers have those qualities that last;
The well-scrubbed benches, made of unstained wood,
Are solid and substantial, uniformly good.

CHATBURN

See the sun rise over Chatburn;
All the eastern sky
Glows with crimson, widespread, splendid,
Battlemented high;
Vivid green the fields below them,
Darker green the trees;
Every leaf is gaily twirling
In the morning breeze.

Pretty ash-trees silhouetted
Like a dark-green lace;
Poplars rounded-leaves but pointed
With a foreign grace;
Now the pale green sky beyond them
Deepens to wild rose
While above, a sea of azure
Flecks and spreads and glows.

BARLEY

"I've never been to Barley."
"Then let us go some day,
And without further parley
Across the tops to Barley
As quickly as we may.
The gentle path from Downham
Or this rough stony bluff
Will lead round Pendle shoulder
Or into Ogden Clough.
Both ways will lead to Barley
And both are sweet enough."

WORSTON ROAD

The raindrops are singing
A song on the road;
The harebells are ringing;
Look, here hops a toad;
Here squats a frog with his long-legged grace,
There two small children are running a race;
Yonder a wagon creaks, carting a load,
How full of life is this quiet Worston road.

OUR MOUSE

There is just one mouse
In this Pendleton house
As lively and pert as can be;
He darts like a flash across the floor,
And vanishes under the kitchen door
Before you can say A B C.

I think he has come
To this cottage home
In from the garden or fields;
He peers round in every corner to see
Crumbs that have fallen from dinner or tea;
Or fragments the larder yields.

A SUMMER MORNING

All the birds are singing,
All the lambs are still,
Telephone wires ringing
Up the breezy hill.

From the dark horizon
Rise up clouds of white;
Blue the skies they rise on,
Blue, and filled with light.

WORSTON

A clanking in the stables,
A distant watch dog's cry,
A solitary owl's hoot,
A stranger passing by;
And over all the stillness
Of moon and stars and sky.

A stray lamb by the roadside
Is nibbling at the grass;
The shadows dance and flicker
With all the winds that pass;
The cattle in the hedgerows
Loom up, a rustling mass.

O God of peace and beauty,
Creator of the night,
To know thee is our duty,
To love thee our delight.
To walk with thee is comfort,
To look to thee is sight.

PENDLE POOL

The daisies are frilly
Around this wee pool;
The waters are stilly,
Clear silent and cool;
The trees overspreading
Shake blossom above,
The moonlight is shedding
The influence I love.

The green grass around it
Is starry with flowers;
The sunbeams have found it
And gilded for hours
The green little glade here
The spring-water pool,
Sure water-nymphs wade here
And find the stream cool.

OGDEN BY MOONLIGHT

Voices in the winds and streams
Where the moonlit bracken gleams,
Where the longest bluff
Steeps down Ogden Clough;
Are they fairy voices
Whom the moon rejoices?
Are those lights their lanterns
Or just jack-o'-lanterns?
Or are they prehistoric folk,
Lively boys and girls,
With their tossing curls
And gay faces
Full of youthful graces,
Real boys and girls?
I only know
That long ago
In this same place
Lived a prehistoric race;
Full many a trace
Of their days
And their ways
Still shows us now
Exactly how
They spent their happy days.

SABDEN FOLD AND OGDEN CLOUGH

Sabden Fold and Ogden Clough
Bring variety enough;
One so sweetly pastoral,
Green trees, farms and grassy wall,
The other
Of another
Sort altogether,
A haunt of wild weather,
Folds interwoven together
In Ogden Clough;
Stark and bluff,
Clean as the cliffs of Dover Coast,
Dropping down sheer from the top almost,
Coarsely haired on the slopes with bracken,
Dry snapping stalks and roots that cracken
When sheep, or a stranger, pass that way,
Going perhaps over Barley way,
Meeting no other folk all day.
Winds that slip in and out of the hills,
Brown-white scampering mountain rills,
Old stone walls grown dark and grey,
Tracks that lead one steeply down
Into the stream with its waters brown
Where the faint sunbeams seem to drown,
And the sharp screcs with their sombre frown
Wind like a track
Over Ogden's back;
How different this clough
With its hillsides rough
From Sabden Fold
Where lanes enfold
A gentle, trilling, easy brook,
Fields with a pleasant homely look,
Farms and barns and watchdogs' kennels,
Little trickles, many channels,
Left from the last slow-seeping snowbroth,
Rivulets still clogged up with snow-froth,
Then the green woodland of Cock Clough—
Here is variety enough.

DOWNHAM

Downham nestles under Pendle,
Grey-green local stone;
Jutting out along a hillside
As if it had grown.

Up and down the hill it wanders,
Here and there a stream,
Here the church, there the meanders
Of the water gleam.

Here the snowdrops and the scyllas
Grow along the way.
Soon the daffodils in bud will
Make the roadside gay.

Folk emerging from their doorways
Gazing at the sun,
Basking in the warmth of Springtime
Feel the winter's done.

Though they still see snow on Pendle
In its gulfs and cracks,
Yet each dazzling patch is dwindling
As the frosts relax.



MERELY MEARLEY

Ogden Clough is a beautiful bluff,
But it doesn't compare with Mearley;
To anyone who loves scenery
Mearley's as pretty as ever can be;
Its little stream has a witchery
That fascinates me;
My thoughts turn to it most readily
I climb its wooded slopes merrily,
Rustle its bracken cheerily,
Mearley's the place for me!

COLOURS

Black, dark green, pale green, yellow and white,
I sort out all the colours each night
Of the daffodil-patterned curtain there,
The brown and orange upon the stair,
The brass and black of the fireplace,
The electric light with its silvers and greys,
The soft brown hearthrug, long and silky,
Distempered walls, pale cream and milky,
The dark-green lining of the armchair;
—Outside, on the hillside bare,
Are colours just the same;
Mosses like crimson flame
Or greener than the green armchair;
Bracken of a brown more rare
Than the hearthrug even; and fair
Beyond compare
Is the deep blue of the sky out there;
Silver and gold and blue are the stars,
Others are green, and the long grey bars
Of the clouds lie across the silvery moon;
Over the dark-green hill the winds croon,
Wander about the pitch-black sere,
Toss every black and twisted tree,
Shake the brown grasses
And ruffle the masses
Of the black peat-earth free.





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